1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

593 [562] importance, but treatment of that subject must be reserved for another time. The balance maintained in the Umbundu social system, which has already been noted,[1] together with woman's important position in the economic sphere, give to the women and girls a relatively satisfactory place in Umbundu society. It has also been noted that woman's sphere has suffered less disintegration than has man's. Although the girl may have somewhat less freedom than the boy, her personal prospects are more stable, and in the long run more satisfactory.

Adjustments between parents and children among the Ovimbundu are relatively satisfactory. The fact that there are no specific father–daughter or mother–son avoidances or taboos, beyond the general laws of incest which nearly all cultures maintain, indicates an absence of strain in these relationships. In our own society adult–child fixations, and particularly the parent–child fixations, with the consequent repressions, are very common and are held to be responsible, at least in part, for much trouble including difficulties of adjustment at pubescence.[2] In traditional Umbundu society such fixations occur very infrequently, if at all.[3] In this context we should be reminded of the following factors:

● [855]
1. The early and continued close association of the child largely (although not exclusively) with the parent of the same sex.[4]
2. The association of the child with many (classificatory) 'fathers' and 'mothers' which may result in a partial transfer of affection.[2]
3. The absence of fondling, kissing, and other close bodily contact in display of affection.[5]

157 The picture in these respects is not unlike that of the Samoans given by Margaret Mead.[6] In some other respects it is quite different but it is similar in the apparent absence of a period of adolescent *Sturm und Drang*. What actual correlations there may be between parent–child fixations and a period of adolescent stress I do not know. The absence of any such period has been reported

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 43.
[2] Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 355 ff.
[3] The proverbial inability of a widow properly to rear a child (*vide supra*, p. 102) may indicate difficulties of this sort.
[4] *Vide supra*, p. 98.
[5] No display of affection whatever is congenial to the Ovimbundu, except to babies and between adolescent age-mates of the same sex.
[6] Op. cit., chap. x.